

District Conservationist Performance Plan 2008

(1) MISSION RESULTS

(critical)

Demonstrates support for NRCS strategic goals and initiatives within the Field Team and contributes to the achievement of overall Agency initiatives. Stresses accountability and continuous improvement to employees/team members, makes timely and effective decisions, and produces results through strategic thinking and decisive action.

Demonstrates responsiveness to management, the public, and to internal and external customers. Continually reviews, monitors, and strives to improve organizational performance to achieve NRCS mission results. Finds ways to help the organization make getting conservation work done easier - for both employees and the public. Identifies common-sense ways to get more people interested in conservation and opportunities to eliminate red-tape and unnecessary bureaucracy.

Alignment: Accomplishment of the objectives in this element contributes to the accomplishment of the following Agency goals and mgt initiatives: USDA Strategic Goal 6; NRCS Strategic Goals 1-6, and the USDA and NRCS Mgt Initiative to Establish Budget and Performance Improvement.

Links to 2008 Supervisory District Conservationist Performance Objective (1): Provide conservation planning, technical and financial assistance to private land owners and producers to achieve annual targets for Budget and Performance Integration (BPI) goals, on-time delivery of program services; on-scheduled implementation of participant contracts and increases in putting conservation on the ground.

Performance Objective (1): Provide conservation planning, technical and financial assistance to private land owners and producers to achieve annual targets for Budget and Performance Integration (BPI) goals, on-time delivery of program services; on-scheduled implementation of participant contracts and increases in putting conservation on the ground.

Performance Standards/Measures

- Provides guidance to land users and producers to ensure conservation plans adhere to all applicable NRCS policies and include multiple alternatives, is economically and technically feasible and addresses resource needs. Practice Standards and Specifications are followed according to the Technical Guide.

- Facilitates training on the policies, techniques and procedures on developing conservation plans for field staff

- Provides guidance to producers and land users in completing required documentation (i.e. engineering studies, specifications & paperwork) in accordance with the established guidelines to avoid contract delays that may impact practice implementation
- Meets 90-100% of annual target for BPI goals
- Monitors ProTracts ensuring program contracts are properly entered into within the established timeframes and potential problems and delays are identified and actions taken as appropriate
- Monitors program contracts for compliance with program and policy guidelines. Actively follows-up via communication and correspondence for non-compliant contracts and considers taking alternative actions (i.e. modifications, cancellations) as appropriate.
- At least X% of scheduled contracted practices are implemented by the established project timelines. Alternative options (i.e. contract modification and cancellations) are considered for non-compliant contracts. Maintains a reporting process to keep management apprised of status changes, issues and variances in meeting timelines
- Provides technical assistance to land users, producers and local conservation groups in order to resolve resource issues to facilitate the implementation of practices. Identifies other technical resources to address questions outside of areas of expertise (i.e. area, state specialist)
- Maximizes the utilization of program funds by identifying opportunities to match programs with land user conservation needs
- Conservation planning and financial and technical services provided covers at least ____ % to ____ % of assigned territory. (Toolkit ARC-GIS to track)
- Addresses conservation needs and issues by collaborating with local and government organizations
- ____% to ____% of practice implementations are completed in accordance with practice standards
- Ensures practice reimbursements are approved for payment within 30 days after installation.
- Demonstrates new technology and tools to land users prior to contract implementation to increase their understanding of available resources

Performance Objective (2): Develops and implements a Field Office Plan that aligns with the Pennsylvania Business Plan.

Performance Standards/Measures:

- Develops and implements a current Field Plan for assigned territory that includes deadlines and specific staff responsibilities to guide Field operations of putting conservation on the land at the local level. Ensures the plan aligns with the Pennsylvania Business Plan and addresses local needs. The outcome is a management tool to guide field operations to achieve the Agency's strategic goals and objectives.
- Monitors performance against the Field Plan. 80-90% of the action items in the Field Plan are accomplished by established due dates.

(2) EXECUTION OF DUTIES

(critical)

Work is carried out in an efficient and effective manner to accomplish identified goals and priorities. Assists Supervisory DC with technical guidance to field team staff and ensures that it is ordinarily provided in a timely manner. Performance management is implemented in accordance with procedure. Issues, concerns, or problems are handled promptly and fairly. To the extent possible, staff is properly trained and complies with occupational health and safety programs. Management decisions at all levels are supported and implemented within appropriate timeframes.

Alignment: Alignment of the objective of this element contributes to the USDA and the NRCS Management Initiatives to Improve Human Capital Mgt; Improve Financial Mgt; Expand Electronic Government, Eliminate Improper Payments and Improve Real Property Mgt

Links to 2008 Supervisory District Conservationist Performance Objective (3): Provide leadership and management to the assigned staff that effectively allocates workload; identifies and addresses personnel issues; and motivates, develops, and rewards employees resulting in an increase in employee satisfaction as measured through productivity and feedback from employees and customers.

Performance Objective (3): Coordinates the completion of work products with the assigned staff that effectively allocates workload; identifies and addresses personnel issues; and motivates, develops, and rewards employees resulting in an increase in employee satisfaction as measured through productivity and feedback from co-workers and customers.

- Prepares reports that are accurate and complete within established timeframes with no more than 1-3 exceptions
- In accordance with policy and procedures, processes payments within 24 hours of receipt
- Achieves or demonstrates progress toward ensuring that no improper payments are issued

- Achieves or demonstrates progress towards working to providing information about program benefits to producers to ensure that they can make informed decisions (i.e., newsletters, counter information, producer meetings, meetings with producer organizations, etc.)
- Completes all tasks required within established timeframes 95% of the time
- Meet Federal contracting regulations with respect to processing, follow through and life span with no more than 3 exceptions
- Processes requests in a timely manner 90% of the time
- Regularly cooperates with coworkers and others in meeting commitments and accomplishing assigned work on time; i.e., sharing information freely
- Fosters productive and cooperative working relationships by showing understanding, courtesy, tact and politeness to others with no more than 2-3 valid complaints
- Consistently raises concerns in constructive manner and offers potential solutions

(3) EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/CIVIL RIGHTS (EO/CR) (Critical)

Equal Opportunity/Civil Rights: Performs all duties in a manner which consistently demonstrates fairness, cooperation, and respect towards coworkers, office visitors, and all others in the performance of official business. Demonstrates an awareness of EO/CR policies and responsibilities of the Agency and the Departmental goals of valuing a diverse, yet unified workforce.

Alignment: In support of USDA's Civil Rights Performance Plan and NRSC Mgt Initiative: Ensuring Civil Rights.

Links to 2008 Supervisory District Conservationist Performance Objective (4): Develop and implement outreach strategies at the local level to provide parity in the delivery of conservation services and technical assistance, ensuring equal access to all ethnic and underserved land users.

Performance Objective (4): Participates in outreach strategies at the local level to provide parity in the delivery of conservation services and technical assistance, ensuring equal access to all ethnic and underserved land users.

Performance Standards/Measures:

Program Delivery: Assists Supervisory DC with activities such as to monitors and provides reports to leadership on the number of women and minorities who participate in Agency programs.

- Assists Supervisory DC with the following: (a) takes affirmative steps to increase the level of participation by businesses owned and operated by women, minorities, service disabled veterans, small and disadvantaged businesses, and American Indians/Alaskan Natives, in Field Team contracting activities during the year, and (b) supports and participates in at least three outreach initiatives to ensure all customers receives equal opportunity to access programs, activities, and services consistent with the Agency's Civil Rights Performance Plan and NRCS' Strategic Plan

- Increase participation of underserved customers by 5% to 10%

- Submits articles, public interest stories and new conservation practices for publication in local and minority newspapers to garner interest in new programs At least one/performance year is prepared for submission to the media.

- Ensures that all local/district media coverage, press releases and other communications provided are: (a) generated in a timely manner, (b) informative, and (c) effective and pertinent to local issues, programs and new development

Performance Objective (5): Supports USDA's Civil Rights Performance Plan and NRCS Management Initiative to maintain a workforce that more closely reflects the Civilian Labor Force. Provides guidance and information to staff on safety and health .

Performance Standards/Measures:

Employment – Takes affirmative steps to recruit, train, and promote employees from diverse backgrounds

Accountability – Performance against EO/CR goals. Assists management with goals and completes mandatory Civil Rights training.

- Fosters a workplace environment that supports civil rights and EEO (free of discriminatory bias and reprisals; and where the workforce, customers, and business partners are treated fairly with dignity and respect). Reports to Supervisory DC the need for follow on the action of subordinates or others in cases where civil rights of others are violated

- Advises others that each will be held accountable for compliance with civil rights, and establishes, through personal example, that when addressing co-workers, delivering speeches, making public appearances, or representing NRCS in any capacity, inappropriate comments regarding race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status will not be tolerated

Complaint Processing – Assists Supervisory DC to resolve employment complaints and workforce disputes at all times, particularly early in the process, by offering alternative dispute resolution, training, and alternative assignments; by timely response to request for information from EEO counselors, mediators, investigators, and adjudicators; and by prompt implementation of settlement agreements.

- Responds to Supervisors about the needs of EEO counselors, mediators, adjudicators, investigators by mutually established dates and implements settlement agreements by agreed-to dates

Safety and Health -- Ensures that the field office emergency plans/evacuation plans are current and others have information and guidance to comply with occupational health & safety programs and to manage in the event of a disaster and emergency situation.

(4) CUSTOMER SERVICE

(non-critical)

Provides advice that is timely, responsive, and accurate. Maintains appropriate rapport with internal and external customers. Develops and establishes working relationships with external organizations as required. Keeps supervisor and/or team leader informed of difficult and/or controversial issues and unique problems. Takes action to effectively solve problems before they have an adverse impact on the organization, or on other employees.

Alignment: This objective contributes to the accomplishment of the USDA Strategic Goal 6: Protect and Enhance the Nation's Natural Resource Base and Environmental, NRCS Strategic Goals 1-6.

Links to 2008 Supervisory District Conservationist Performance Objective (6): Ensures responsiveness to organizational leadership, internal and external customers, partners, and the general public to maintain and improve customer relations.

Performance Objective (6): Ensures responsiveness to organizational leadership, internal and external customers, partners, and the general public to maintain and improve customer relations.

Performance Standards/Measures:

- Consistently provides information/advice that is timely, responsive, and accurate. Maintains appropriate rapport with internal and external customers. Develops and establishes working relationships with external organizations as required. Keeps supervisor informed of difficult and/or controversial issues and unique problems. Takes action to effectively solve problems before they have an adverse impact on the organizational unit or on other employees or customers.

- Follows through on customers' inquiries, requests, and complaints. Keeps customers up-to-date about the progress of projects.

- Maintains clear communication with customers regarding mutual expectations and follow through.

- Feedback from Customers indicate satisfaction with: (a) the quality of service delivered, including indication that any necessary collaboration met their needs, (b) the quantity and quality of information provided increased their understanding of NRCS administrative programs, (c) the services provided or solutions offered met their overall needs, and (d) information and data provided was accurate and provided by expected due dates.

(5) INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TEAM (non-critical)

Regularly demonstrates the ability to contributions to the success of the team and does not put individual needs or preferences ahead of the teams. Works to build camaraderie and teamwork both internally and externally with partners and Technical Service Providers (TSP's) , to achieve common goals and accomplish priorities.

Alignment: Contributes to the NRCS Management Initiatives for EEO, Fair and Equitable Service Delivery, Human Capital, and Budget and Performance Integration.

Links to 2008 Supervisory District Conservation Performance Objective (6) provides leadership and vision across the State to increase conservation benefits achieved through effective and efficient implementation of technical and financial resources and to increase employee satisfaction as measure through productivity and feedback from employees.

Performance Objective (6): Openly and consistently demonstrates a commitment to maintain and improve the team environment and places emphasis on strong internal communication and working relationships.

Performance Standards/Measures:

- Regularly cooperates with coworkers and others in meeting commitments and accomplishing assigned work on time; i.e., sharing information freely
 - Fosters productive and cooperative working relationships by showing understanding, courtesy, tact and politeness to others with no more than 2-3 valid complaints
 - Consistently raises concerns in constructive manner and offers potential solutions
- Communications:
- Communicates clearly and shares accurate information 80-90% of the time
 - Responds to general program questions within 48 hours with no more than 2-3 exceptions. Elevates more complex questions to supervisor, team leader, or other individual responsible within 2 hours of inquiry

- Schedules staff meetings on a regular basis and after major program announcements and more often if required
- Prepares written documents that are clear, concise and understandable as well as following prescribed procedures and within established timeframes with no more than 3 exceptions
- Regularly shares program for which one is responsible with co-workers to increase staff awareness of all program areas within timeframes established by management 90% of the time
- Resolves disputes and problems with others through use of problem solving, conflict resolution and negotiation